

CPYRGHT

Tie to National Policy Suggested to White House

U. S. Is Urged to Study Direction of Tele-

By David Burnham

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A Federal Communications Commission official has told the White House that the rising star of international television means the Government must consider some type of control over programs shown in foreign countries.

The suggestion was made in a memorandum by Tedson J. Meyers, administrative assistant to FCC Chairman Newton N. Minow.

The central recommendation of the Meyers study was the establishment of an "Office of International Television" to make sure that the broadcasting resources of the United States develop "along lines most beneficial to the foreign policy of the United States."

To accomplish this, Meyers said, the new office would have to decide "whether it is desirable to establish criteria for the content of American programming displayed overseas—and if so, how such criteria should be determined and applied."

The memorandum was sent to Ralph A. Dungan, special assistant to President Kennedy.

Meyers said in a statement: "I have heard of the UPI story and I am concerned lest it give the impression that I have recommended a form of program control for international television."

"I'd like to make it emphatically clear that I have not recommended anything of the kind. It is my own belief that whatever policy is adopted must encourage the greatest possible freedom of communication among nations."

Robert W. Sarnoff, Board chairman of the National Broadcasting Co., said on Wednesday that the development of international telecasting with the Telstar satellite was no ground for "governmental tampering" with programs.

In a statement to radio

television editors, Sarnoff said any attempt to "improve" America's image by such a step would be more than offset by "the damage done to that image by the very act of governmental tampering with free expression."

Sarnoff also said that news programs would be "the grist" of satellite-transmitted programs, not Westerns and detective stories.

Meyers anticipated the reaction of broadcasters to his proposals.

Since the television industry guards its freedom jealously, it "must be assured promptly that fresh

LAWRENCE LAURENT is on vacation. His column will be resumed when he returns.

Government interest in the field does not mark the onset of an era of "bureaucratic meddling," he said.

He also recommended influencing influential members of Congress as to the

ing on the proposal. It did not require legislation.

In the proposed study, Meyers

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In addition to licensing international broadcasting and considering direct Government controls, Meyers also said the Government should:

news and entertainment programs that can be sold to foreign policy objectives of the United States. Meyers said the proposed

television office could be located in the White House, the USIA, or the FCC, but he recommended placing it in the State Department.